

FINITE LIFE CYCLE DEMAND FORECASTING

ABSTRACT

A demand forecasting system and method that provide highly flexible and efficient tools for forecasting demand for products that are characterized by finite life cycles are described. In accordance with this approach, the overall life cycle of a product is incorporated into the demand forecast in the form of a life cycle template that provides a high degree of control over the end of life point for a product. Individual factors (e.g., upcoming known events) affecting a forecast may be tracked and selectively applied to the forecast so that users may see the impact of each factor on product demand. The above-described forecasting tool also provides a framework for establishing an initial forecast and updating the forecast based upon the impact of inventory relative to sell-through and actual demand data. This approach avoids the need for manual override of forecasting data. In addition, this approach explicitly resolves the forecasting task into a set of independent factors that describe various aspects of end-customer demand and that may be activated selectively through a graphical user interface. In this way, this methodology improves the efficiency and refines the accuracy with which forecasters may generate a demand forecast and apply their own judgment and experience to the final forecast.

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